



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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For Immediate Release

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Park Foundation Announces 2013 Eakin Philanthropy Awards

The Fairfax County Park Foundation announced its 2013 Eakin Philanthropy Award recipients honoring Jon and Ruth Ruskin for their work through the RZ Foundation which supports the RecPAC summer camp program and Arts and in the Parks, and ExxonMobil for their support of environmental education as well as the Summer Entertainment Series.

The Fairfax County Park Foundation established the Eakin Philanthropy Award to recognize visionary financial and material contributions that significantly enhance Fairfax County parks. In 1951, LeRoy Eakin, Sr. donated 14 acres of land which became Fairfax County's first park. The Park Foundation is proud to recognize individuals and organizations which help to continue the Eakin legacy. Awards will be presented during a reception and program slated for November.

Jon and Ruth Ruskin, residents of Falls Church, have always loved taking their children to Fairfax County Parks for recreation and education. They found countless ways to teach their children about the importance and beauty of plants and flowers at the local nature centers or along the wooded pathways they followed. They developed a passion for parks and decided to share that fervor with others through the Fairfax County Park Foundation. Since 2008, the family's RZ Foundation has made generous financial contributions to support the Park Authority's free Arts in the Parks program and to provide RecPAC summer camp scholarships for children who would otherwise not have the opportunity. Over the years, the donations have reached tens of thousands of dollars and have resulted in a strong bond between the family values the Ruskins hold so dear and the mission of the Fairfax County Park Authority.

ExxonMobil is an involved corporate neighbor and a willing partner in the support of the popular Summer Entertainment Series that brings a series of shows, concerts and movies to the community each summer. These concerts, held in local parks feature talented local entertainers as well as regional performance of prominence. Best of all, they take place close to home and are free.

ExxonMobil also understands the value of stewardship education and invests in environmental education by helping to fund an outdoor classroom at Huntley Meadows Park in Alexandria as well as providing ongoing support for the Meaningful Watershed Education Experience held at Hidden Oaks Nature Center. This project provides an opportunity for local middle school students to engage in a hands-on educational program about the importance of the Chesapeake Bay. To date, ExxonMobil has contributed over \$130,000 in financial support for both initiatives.

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More than 240 students ages 11 to 14 will have the chance to increase their understanding about the causes and consequences of watershed pollution. The targeted schools have a majority of economically disadvantaged students who might otherwise not have these learning opportunities. Topical learning areas include potable water, where water comes from, the importance of the watershed, non-point source pollution, groundwater and soil permeability, human impacts and invasive plants.

The Fairfax County Park Foundation supports the Fairfax County Park Authority by raising private funds, obtaining grants and creating partnerships that supplement tax dollars to meet our community's needs for park land, facilities and services. The Fairfax County Park Foundation is a nonprofit charitable organization under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. For more information about the Fairfax County Park Foundation and its many programs and opportunities to participate in support of park programs and facilities, visit online at www.fairfaxparkfoundation.org/about/default.htm.

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